

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. In the case of Shri P.N. Sharma, Director MMTC, Government has since taken a decision to refer the case to CBI, as advised by CVC. The advise of CVC in the case against Shri S.D. Kapoor, CMD, MMTC is under consideration.

**Assistance to salt industry**

2589. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether to production of salt has suffered a severe set back in the recent devastating earthquake in Gujarat;

(b) the loss of production of salt in terms of quantity; and

(c) what steps have been taken to help the salt industry and salt producers to overcome the impact of the earthquake?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (DR. RAMAN SINGH): (a) and (b) No, Sir. However, the production loss of common salt and refined iodized salt due to the earthquake is estimated about 10 lakh tonnes and 4 lakh tonnes, respectively.

(c) The Government of India is operating a scheme through the Office of Salt Commissioner for grant of financial assistance to salt works damaged on account of natural calamities' which provides for payment of ex-gratia assistance and rehabilitation loans to the affected salt works in respect of damages caused to the earth work, viz. reservoirs, condensers, crystallizer, bunds etc. The Committees have been constituted to assess the actual damages caused to the salt works for grant of necessary ex-gratia assistance/rehabilitation loans, as per the provisions of the said scheme.

The Government of Gujarat vide their Resolution dated 2.3.2001 have announced to extend the following assistance/relief where the State Government has declared affected area and wherein salt works have been damaged due to the earthquake.

- (i) Small Agarias holding 10 acres plot would be paid at the rate of Rs. 2000/- and if the cost of damages is more than Rs. 2000/- they would be paid at the rate of Rs. 5000/- considering the 100% damages.
- (ii) In the affected area, as declared by the State Government, the lessee will

[20 March, 2001]

RAJYA SABHA

be exempted from payment of Ground Rent and Royalty for one year for the period from January, 2001 to December, 2001.

As regards the salt refineries, the Government of Gujarat *vide* their Resolution dated 25.2.2001 have announed the following package in respect of small, medium and big industrial units falling in the earthquake zones 4 and 5, and suffered damages:-

- \* "For the repair of damaged building, plant and machinery, an assistance of Rs. 60 lakhs will be paid at the rate of 60 per cent for the new investment.
- \* As per the requirement of the units, bankable loan assistance of Rs. 2 lakh will be paid for two years.
- \* For one year, electricity charges will be recovered on the basis of actual consumption of power instead of minimum electricity bill.
- \* There will be total exemption from the stamp duty chargeable for the legal documents for the implementation of the above relief."

#### **Rural Telephones Installed in Assam**

2590. SHRI PRAKANTA WARISA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the district-wise details of target fixed by Government for providing rural telephones in Assam during the last three years and till-date; and

(b) the district-wise details of actual number of rural telephones installed so far in Assam including hilly areas of the State?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRITAPAN SIKDAR): (a) and (b) Telecom District-wise targets for providing new telephone connections are fixed by the Circle as a whole i.e. both for rural and urban areas and not separately.

Telecom District-wise (SSA-wise) details of targets and achievements for providing telephones and VPTs (Village Public Telephones) for the last three years and till date are given in the Statement (See below).

Details of achievements of providing telephone connections in the rural areas for Assam including hilly areas of the State as a whole have been compiled